

The following Listing of Claims replaces all prior listings, and versions, of claims in the subject patent application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Previously amended): An apparatus for producing and filling sausage meat, comprising:

- a producing station (29) for producing sausage meat between a deactivation stage and a full-load driven producing stage,
- a filling station (12a, 12b, 12c) for filling the sausage meat produced by said producing station,
- a means(30a, 30b, 30c) for determining the amount of sausage meat needed by said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c), and
- a control means (15) which controls the sausage meat output of said sausage-meat producing station (29) on the basis of the determined amount of needed sausage meat between said deactivation stage and said full-load driven producing stage in at least one further intermediate stage in which the sausage meat output rate of said producing station (29) lies between the rates of a deactivated producing station and a full-load driven producing station.

Claim 2 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control means (15) is operable such that the sausage meat output of said sausage-meat producing station (29) is controlled substantially continuously on the basis of the amount of sausage meat needed by said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).


Claim 3 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, and at least one reservoir (9) for storing sausage meat is provided between said sausage-meat producing station (29) and said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

Claim 4 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, and a means (30a, 30b, 30c) for determining the amount of sausage meat needed is provided such that the sausage meat throughput of said sausage-meat filling station (12a, 12b, 12c) is sensed for determining the amount of sausage meat needed.

Claim 5 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, and at least one pipe (10) for transporting sausage meat is provided between said sausage-meat producing station (29) and said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

Claim 6 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises a grinder (23) whose throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

Claim 7 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said sausage-meat producing station comprises at least one mixer (4) whose sausage meat throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

 Claim 8 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises at least one evacuator (6, 24) whose sausage meat throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

Claim 9 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises at least one pump (4, 6, 24) whose sausage meat throughput is controlled by said controlled means (15).

Claim 10 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises an emulsifier (25) whose sausage meat throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

Claim 11 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises a pre-chopper (2) whose throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

Claim 12 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of said filling stations (12a, 12b, 12c) are provided.

Claim 13 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein at least one reservoir (13a, 13b, 13c) is provided for each said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

Claim 14 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 12 or 13, wherein for each said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c) at least one means (30a, 30b, 30c) is provided for

determining the amount of sausage meat needed by the respective filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

Claim 15 (Previously amended): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the sausage meat produced is transported under exclusion of air and under pressure at least in part from said sausage-meat producing station (29) into said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

Claim 16 (Withdrawn): A method for producing and filling sausage meat, comprising the steps of:

producing sausage meat between a deactivated production rate and a full-load production rate,
filling the produced sausage meat, and
on the basis of the amount of sausage meat needed by the filling process, ejecting the sausage meat in the producing process at least at a rate which lies between the rate of a deactivated production rate and a full-load production rate.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn): The method according to claim 16, and, in response to the amount of sausage meat needed in the filling process, ejecting sausage meat from the producing process at a rate which is adjustable substantially continuously.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn): The method according to claim 16 or 17, and controlling the sausage meat output of the producing process on the basis of the amount of sausage meat needed in the filling process.

Claim 19 (Withdrawn): The method according to claim 16, and storing the sausage meat after the production process and prior to filling process.

Claim 20 (Withdrawn): The method according to claim 19, and for the determination of the amount of sausage meat needed, carrying out a measurement as to how much sausage meat is stored.

Claim 21 (Withdrawn): The method according to claim 16, and for the determination of the amount of sausage meat needed, sensing the sausage meat throughput of the sausage-meat filling process.

Claim 22 (Withdrawn): The method according to claim 19, and adjusting the sausage-meat producing process such that a minimally necessary amount of sausage meat is stored.

C1 cancelled